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THE
ORACLE.

A
COMEDY of one ACT.

As it is acted at the
THEATRE-ROYAL
IN
COVENT-GARDEN.

Ismael Maria
By Mrs. CIBBER.

LONDON:

Printed for R. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall; and
Sold by M. COOPER, in Pater-noster-Row;
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MDCCLII.

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THIS Book, written with the
greatest success, and where
I had the advantage of opportunity in
Original Language, is a very rare
and excellently performed. It was
there I saw it; and was so struck
with the novelty of the subject, and
the simplicity, and at length of the
sentiments, that I could not resist at-
tempting a Translation of it. I have
since thought the best advantage
which I could make of it, was to
assign it to honour the memory of
the author, by being it now
put in the best manner I was able



Advertisement.

THIS Little Piece met with the greatest success at *Paris*, where it had the advantage of appearing in its Original language, elegantly wrote and excellently performed: It was there I saw it; and was so struck with the novelty of the subject, and the simplicity and delicacy of the sentiments, that I could not resist attempting a Translation of it. I have since thought, the best acknowledgment I could make the Town, who designed to honour me at my Benefit, would be to bring it out that night in the best manner I was able.

How

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

How I have succeeded in the attempt is wholly submitted to their judgment. I shall only add, that if I have been so happy to contribute in the least to their amusement, I shall think myself amply recompensed for the trouble and expence that attended the bringing it upon the Stage.

S. CIBBER.



T O

MRS. C I B B E R,

On her writing the ORACLE.

*M*ELPOMENE, in sad despair,
Her bosom beat and tore her hair,
Then wildly threw her arms about.

Apollo came to her relief,
Enquir'd the reason of her grief,
And why she made so strange a rout ?

How can you ask me, said the Muse,
Here, see ; this ORACLE peruse,
And say, have I not cause to moan ?
Why was not I to this invited ?
Thalia wrote what you indited ;
'Tis a contrivance of your own.

I think my Favourite might have paid,
Since she was certain of your aid,
Her gratitude to Tragedy:
I train'd her up with Parent care,
And now you let my sister share
The honour which was due to me.

I own, reply'd the God, and smil'd,
'Twas I inspir'd your darling child,
In this her modest first essay;
And if to Tragic Themes she'll rise,
And follow you amidst the skies,
Depend upon't, I'll lead the way.

C. DENIS.

PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. BARRY.

*THE Little Piece we offer to your view,
In France tho' often shewn, is here quite new;
And novelty, the men at least confess,
Makes half the charm of wit, as well as dress.*

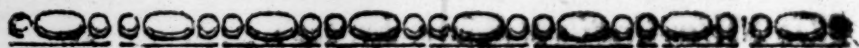
*She hopes — for 'tis a Female has been scribbling —
That no Male Critic here will dare be nibbling.
A woman write! — Yes, faith — I am no fibber;
And who d'ye think this author is? — Our CIBBER.
Genius she gives up freely to the men,
'Tis Nobler Gratitude inspires her pen:
Your kindness to acknowledge, not repay,
Is all her aim in this her first essay.
She's now a dressing, and in piteous taking!
But what's the Player's to the Poet's quaking?
I know what 'tis to act a first-night's part,
And doubly pity her with all my heart.
Yet, after all, why shou'd she fear disgrace?
I see indulgence smile in ev'ry face.*

*The Piece, we hope, will all your fancies hit,
Tho' it, perhaps, may want — what some call wit.
No smutty jokes, — not one intriguing wench —
Odd creatures, sure, our lively friends the French!
But then we have some Pantomime to shew,
Machines in shape of men that come and go;
A Fairy too — Odso! — I should not blab —
Well — but — I know you hugely lik'd Queen Mab:*

And

PROLOGUE.

*And Ours, were but this magic circle free,
Cou'd shew some pretty tricks, as well as She;
But, for this time, your very goodness foils
Our fairy's art, and half your pleasure spoils:
On this full stage, (we see it with glad hearts)
Our Statue-dancers cannot shew their parts;
But what you lose for this one crouded night,
Whole years of best endeavour shall requite.*



Dramatis PERSONÆ.

FAIRY-QUEEN.

OBERON, her Son.

CINTHIA, a young Princess.

Mrs. ELMY.

Mr. DYER.

Mrs. CIBBER.

SCENE, The Fairy's Palace.



THE
ORACLE.



SCENE I.

FAIRY. OBERON.

FAIRY.

INDEED, child, you are quite
intolerable!

OBERON.

But, dear mother ----

B

FAIRY.

FAIRY.

But, dear son, have not I positively forbid your coming here? ---- What have you been doing?

OBERON.

Admiring all that nature ever form'd most beautiful!

FAIRY.

What! You have seen CINTHIA then?

OBERON.

Tir'd with the heat of the day, she was sleeping on a bed of roses ---

FAIRY.

Did she see you?

OBERON.

Dear Madam, don't I tell you, she was asleep? One of her lovely arms supported her head; the other was stretch'd out on the side I was, and seem'd to gather the
flowers

The O R A C L E. 11

flowers that grew about her. She was agitated by some pleasing dream that painted her face with the most lively colours: Transported with so charming a sight, and not satisfied with the pleasure my eyes only received, I was no longer master of myself ----

F A I R Y.

How, child!

O B E R O N.

I seiz'd one of her beautiful hands, and kiss'd it with such extasy, that she stirr'd ---- When fearing she was going to awake, I stole away, without her seeing me. It is in vain for you, Madam, to command me any longer to keep out of her sight; --- I cannot obey you. I love her, I adore her; I will see her, and tell her so, and make her love me, or die at her feet.

F A I R Y.

My art is great; I am Sovereign of the Fairies; I can, in an instant, build Palaces, raise tempests, and change the most delightful
ful

ful place into the most horrid desert; but I see it is beyond my power to govern a young fool, whose head is fill'd with love.---- Well, go on, child, undo yourself, lose CINTHIA, and, by your rashness and imprudence, destroy the measures I have hitherto taken to procure your happiness with her.

OBERON.

But, dear Madam, what can be your reason for insisting that she should not see me?

FAIRY.

In hopes it will make you more prudent for the future, I'll tell you. At your birth, I consulted the Oracle about your destiny: The answer was this:

“ The son of the Fairy-Sovereign is
“ threaten'd with great misfortunes, but will
“ avoid them all, and even be very happy,
“ if he can make himself lov'd by a young
“ Princess, who believes him deaf, dumb,
“ and insensible.”

OBERON.

OBERON,

Deaf, dumb, and insensible !

F A I R Y.

Judge, my dear son, by the tenderness I have for you, how much affliction that answer gave me. For two years together I never look'd upon you, but with sorrow. At length I imagin'd I had found a way, not only to avoid the misfortunes you were threaten'd with, but even to see the accomplishment of the Oracle, how impossible forever it appear'd to be.

OBERON.

You must pardon me, Madam, if I have not the same confidence that you seem to have in the unaccountable caprice of women, for I can never believe ----

F A I R Y.

Hear me. When you were two years old, there was a Princess born in a little island near this --- it was your CINTHIA. ---

I

I stole her away, and transported her to this Palace, which is inaccessible to all Human beings. Here she has been brought up, and waited upon by Statues only, to which, by my art, I gave motion. I have often amus'd myself with carving a piece of marble before her, and then, animating it with a blow of my wand, it immediately became a little dog playing about her, or a monkey that diverted her with his tricks. In short, I have done every thing I can to persuade her, that she and I are the only two beings that speak, think, and understand; and that all the others, form'd solely for our use or amusement, are absolutely insensible, and altogether incapable of love or hatred, sorrow or pleasure.

O B E R O N.

But what can be your design in having educated her in these false notions?

F A I R Y.

To make her believe, when I present you to her ----

O B E R O N.

OBERON.

Oh ! I understand you ; that I am also some animal, only better fashion'd than those she has already seen. The fancy pleases me ! --- It may succeed. Psyche, before she saw Cupid, thought him a monster ; yet she lov'd him. CINTHIA, deceiv'd by the false ideas you have instill'd into her, will believe me exactly what the Oracle requires she should ; nevertheless, she'll love me ! Reason may be cheated, but inclination cannot : Her heart will receive lessons from nature, that will please her, though she does not comprehend 'em, and which she'll follow by instinct. That secret intelligence, that sympathetic force of hearts will work --- Yes, Madam, she will love me, and I shall then be the happiest of Mortals ! Come, dear mother, let us go seek her this instant. --- You may now safely present me to her, and be assur'd, since the success of my love depends upon it,

I

16 The O R A C L E.

I will be a Statue, a real Statue, ---- a piece of insensible marble.

F A I R Y.

No, no, no, no, son, it is not yet time for you to appear: Slip out at that door, for I see CINTHIA coming this way. In the conversation we shall have together, I shall remember your happiness, and contrive to manage every thing to your satisfaction.

O B E R O N.

One word more, dear mother! When she plays with her dog, he caresses her, you know; may not I do so too, if she plays with me?

F A I R Y.

You are a pretty fellow to act a Statue indeed! Go, go, [*Pushing him out.*] ---- Get you gone, get you gone.

S C E N E



S C E N E II.

FAIRY. CINTHIA.

CINTHIA, [*not perceiving the FAIRY.*]

'T WAS no illusion ---- 'Twas not a
dream, ---- His lips were press'd up-
on my hand!

FAIRY.

What do you say, CINTHIA?

CINTHIA.

Oh! [*starts*] ---- I did not see you.

FAIRY.

His lips were press'd upon your hand!
Whose lips?

CINTHIA.

I don't know. He disappear'd like light-
ning; but when he kiss'd my hand, I believe

C

he

he breath'd upon it some secret fire that has shot into my heart! ---- Yes, from that instant I am not what I us'd to be. ---- I am restless, thoughtful, I want ---- I don't know what I want. I think I breathe another air; all nature seems more chearful, more animated! ---- I have just now been watching two little birds: Oh! what love! what fondness! They were perch'd upon the same bough; they sung to one another; they look'd at one another; but with such looks! [*Sighs*] ---- You and I don't look at one another so. They ceas'd their pretty warbling for a few minutes, but soon began again to sing, or rather to answer one another, with such passion, with such an ardour ---- You laugh!

F A I R Y.

Why, who can help it? for, to answer one another, they must understand.

C I N T H I A.

And so, to be sure, they did.

F A I R Y.

FAIRY.

And do you believe your Lute or Harp-
ficord understand you ; or that they are sen-
sible of the sweetness of your voice, when
they accord so justly with the notes you
sing ?

CINTHIA.

A pretty comparison, truly ! They are Ma-
chines.

FAIRY.

And han't I told you, an hundred times,
that birds are mere Machines, but furnish'd
with finer organs ; because nature, more in-
dustrious, and always superior to art, has con-
triv'd, and plac'd the springs herself ?

CINTHIA.

And you may tell it me over a thousand
and a thousand times, my dear, but I shan't
believe one word of the matter. A secret
feel I had at the sight of those two little
C 2 birds,

birds, contradicts all you can say; for, cou'd I have catch'd 'em, I shou'd have kiss'd 'em, and fondled 'em; I shou'd have put 'em together in my own chamber, and taken care they had every thing they wanted; but I can't say I ever once thought of kissing my Harpsicord, or minding whether my Lute was hot or cold.

F A I R Y, [*Aside.*]

I must surprise her with a new piece of my art. [*To her*] CINTHIA, look at those Statues, examine 'em well; touch 'em; they are marble; and, without doubt, you must be convinc'd that they are not sensible: Yet, by touching some of the springs, I will give them as surprising motions as those that you admir'd so much in the birds, and which made you believe they were intelligent.

[*The FAIRY touches three Statues with her wand; that in the middle comes forward and dances, while the other two play upon instruments, the Orchestra joining in sourdine. ---- Whilst the*
dance

dance is performing, CINTHIA appears melancholly.]

What's the matter, CINTHIA? You are melancholly on a sudden; one would think this diversion gave you pain?

CINTHIA.

It does indeed. It confounds and destroys a thousand ideas that pleas'd me.---- Oh my poor little birds! are you then but Machines! I thought you were sensible, and had infinite satisfaction to be perch'd upon the same bough in day-time, and together in some hollow tree at night. ---- [*To the FAIRY.*] Then a crowd of thoughts came into my head ---- Nature, says I, has inspir'd these birds with this bless'd union, to make them happy; she certainly has not been less kind to me, and there is some being of my species, with whom I am destin'd to live in the same union that these little birds do. ---- You know ---- tell me, my good Sovereign, who cou'd have come and kiss'd my hand, whilst I was asleep?

FAIRY.

F A I R Y, [*Smiling.*]

Why, ---- I suspect it was a young man, whose foot-steps I have to-day trac'd about the Palace : He must, at first, have taken you for a being of his own kind, but finding his mistake when you wak'd, ran away.

C I N T H I A.

A young man! ---- Are men Machines too?

F A I R Y.

Yes ; but something more perfect ; about one degree above your monkey, which you think has so much sense : Their colour is generally white ; they are shap'd like those Statues. I us'd to have some of 'em here, but they had so many failings, that I took a dislike to 'em.

C I N T H I A.

Birds sing ---- Statues dance ---- my watch shews me the hour ---- What do men do?

F A I R Y.

FAIRY.

There are several sorts of 'em. Those who are call'd soldiers, and who are generally thought the prettiest fellows to look at, meet by thousands on great plains, and there, with instruments they have on purpose, they murder one another.

CINTHIA.

Oh that's horrid ! They are certainly Machines ; there can be no sense in all that slaughter : Yet I shou'd not be sorry to see a man neither, if I was not afraid of his killing me.

FAIRY.

You have nothing to fear, my dear CINTHIA ; we are women ; all of 'em submit to us : Those very men, who are so furious amongst themselves, kneel at our feet ; we have something in our eyes that softens 'em, and, like a load-stone, attracts 'em to us. They change themselves to what we like ;
and

and seem to have all our passions and inclinations.

CINTHIA.

I do long vastly to see a man ! Pray, my dear, try to get me a sight of him that kiss'd my hand whilst I was asleep.

FAIRY.

If your looks did not frighten him too much, he may perhaps be still somewhere near the Palace ; I think I'll go, and look for him, before he gets farther off.

CINTHIA.

Do, my dear Sovereign ! And pray make all the haste you can ; I shall be impatient till you return.

S C E N E



S C E N E III.

CINTHIA. [*Alone.*]

SHE laughs. ---- It's certainly at my impatience ---- She has reason ; ---- My curiosity is so great, that it puts all my spirits in a flutter. I have a thousand idle fancies that my heart seems to encourage. ---- A man ---- Well, a man ? ---- Oh ! I have a mind to ---- I have a mind to play a tune upon my Harpsicord,

[*She goes to her Harpsicord,
and returns immediately.*]

A thought comes into my head ---- What a giddy creature I am ! ---- I ought to have gone with her, and then she might have watch'd on one side, and I on the other, and if he had appear'd, we could both have crept softly ---- softly towards him, and have catch'd him.

D

[*She*

[She goes to her Harpsicord, and returns.]

What a cruel suspicion alarms me! Why did not she ask me to go with her? for then we could have help'd one another. She must have thought of it ---- When she said men had so many failings, that she had taken a dislike to 'em, I took notice that she smil'd, and did not seem to say what she thought. ---- Has not she a mind to keep this for herself, and hide him from me, as she has done the others? ---- Oh! but she sha'n't impose upon me so, for I'll run after her instantly, and ---- *[Going out she meets the FAIRY.]*



SCENE IV.

FAIRY. OBERON. CINTHIA.

CINTHIA,

O H! Here she is! Well, have you catch'd him?

FAIRY,

FAIRY.

Yes ; and had not much trouble to bring him.

CINTHIA.

Where is he then ?

FAIRY.

I thought he follow'd me.

CINTHIA.

Oh ! how cou'd you do so ? You have let him run away.

*[She runs to the bottom of the stage,
where she sees OBERON.]*

Ah ! ---- my good Sovereign ! ---- But ----
how ---- yes ---- indeed ! ----

FAIRY. *[Mimicking her.]*

Ah ! ---- my good Sovereign ! ---- But ----
how ---- yes ---- indeed ! ---- What do you
mean ?

D 2

CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

I don't know: You gave me a look that quite confounded me.

FAIRY.

I gave you a look? No, no, no; I might have given you an hundred, and you wou'd not have seen one of 'em, for your eyes were never off him.

CINTHIA.

He is as tall as I am! How he looks at me! How soft and gentle his eyes are! I am sure he is not one of that sort that fight and kill one another. I'll keep him to play with: ---- He shall be my own, sha'n't he?

FAIRY.

Ay, ay; take him, take him.

CINTHIA.

I must give him some name: ---- What shall I call him?

FAIRY.

FAIRY.

What you will. Pray please yourself.

CINTHIA.

Let me see ---- I'll call him ---- I'll call him ---- Charmer!

FAIRY.

With all my heart. But now we must leave Charmer for a little while, and go and observe a phænomenon that will appear this evening about sun-set.

CINTHIA.

Oh, my dear Sovereign! I have seen the sun so often! ----

FAIRY.

But you never saw this phænomenon; and we'll reason together about it.

CINTHIA.

Indeed, Madam, I shall reason sadly.

FAIRY.

FAIRY.

Indeed, my dear! ---- Well, well, stay with your Charmer, I won't constrain you. I don't doubt but this fancy will pass off, like many others.



S C E N E V.

CINTHIA. OBERON.

CINTHIA, [*Looking after the FAIRY.*]

I AM glad she's gone! She was a sad restraint upon me. [*She gazes some time upon OBERON.*] What fine hair! How he holds up his head! He is perfectly well shap'd! My heart seems at last to have found the very object it wanted, and which I have had confus'd ideas of a long time. ---- [*Mimicking the FAIRY.*] This fancy will pass off like many others! [*Goes nearer OBERON.*] No, Charmer,

The O R A C L E. 31

Charmer, I shall always be fond of you. ----
Fancy! What an expression! One wou'd
think she had given me a bird to play with ;
---- but I find a wide difference !---- [*Takes
a chair, and sits down.*] Come, Charmer ! ----
He comes to me ---- he kneels before me ----
Oh ! how pretty that is ! ----

[*Whilst OBERON is kneeling, she pulls a
long ribbon out of her pocket, ties it a-
bout his neck, and twists the end round
her arm.*]

I hear a noise ---- Sure she can't be come
back already !

[*She gets up, runs to the door, and
pulls him after her.*]

No. It was only my fear : She's busy
observing her phaenomenon. I hope she'll
stay till I fetch her !

[*She places another chair near hers, and
makes signs for OBERON to sit.*]

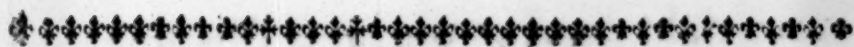
Charmer ! Come, Charmer ---- sit there.
---- He won't sit down ---- He kneels again
at my feet ! ---- Yes, Charmer, I have given
you

you a right name ; you are a Charmer ! ---
You inchant me ! ---- Alas ! The pleasure I
have in seeing him misleads my reason ; I
speak to him as if he cou'd understand me.
---- I am fond of deceiving myself --- I scarce
know where I am. I sigh ---- I feel a secret
pleasure, ---- an agitation, ---- a softness that
I never knew till now. ---- Give your hand,
Charmer. ---- Dear me ! his heart beats like
mine ! *[She gets up, and walks away.]*

O B E R O N, *[walks to the other side
of the stage.]*

I can hold no longer ; this is too critical a
situation for a lover !

S C E N E



S C E N E VI.

FAIRY. OBERON. CINTHIA.

FAIRY, [*Aside.*]

I See 'tis time for me to appear, or my son
wou'd soon forget that he is to be deaf,
dumb, and insensible.

CINTHIA, [*Running to the FAIRY.*]

Oh! My dear Sovereign, grant me one
favour.

FAIRY.

What is it, CINTHIA?

CINTHIA.

Animate Charmer, if you love me; con-
trive that he may think, speak, understand
me and answer me.

FAIRY.

You ask an impossibility.

E

CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

An impossibility, Madam ?

FAIRY.

Yes, CINTHIA, you know 'tis impossible.

CINTHIA.

You distract me !

FAIRY.

I am sorry for it, my dear CINTHIA ; but must I be oblig'd again to tell you, that these beings that serve to divert us, can, indeed, by the springs that are in them, be made to imitate some of our actions, but that they are altogether incapable of thought or reflection ?

CINTHIA.

I understand you, Madam, I understand you ! I plainly perceive your design !

FAIRY.

FAIRY.

My design! What design?

CINTHIA.

Why, Madam, you are very wise and learned, and want to make me as great a Philosopher as yourself, that you may always have somebody to reason with; and you won't animate Charmer, because you think, if we cou'd converse together, we shou'd be wholly taken up with the pleasure of seeing and loving one another, and shou'd care very little for your sublime conversations. But, Madam, I declare to you that I am ignorant, and will continue so; that I have an aversion to learning; that I hate and detest every thing that belongs to it; and that I'll go this instant, and destroy all those instruments of Philosophy, which appear to me very ridiculous furniture for my apartment.

S C E N E



S C E N E VII.

FAIRY. OBERON.

OBERON.

A DIEU Globes, Spheres, and Maps of
the world! ---- How delightful is that
anger!

FAIRY.

'Tis diverting at least. Why, son, she's as
hasty as you are.

OBERON.

I shall love her the better for it. What
can give a lover greater joy, than to hear his
mistress express a tender sentiment with
warmth! But I must tell you, Madam, if
you had not come in as you did, I cou'd
have contain'd myself no longer :- I was just
going to speak.

FAIRY.

. FAIRY.

And the Oracle? ----

OBERON.

The Oracle! Oh! I cou'd think of nothing but CINTHIA; encourag'd, flatter'd, and carefs'd by her beautiful eyes, I, for a long time, kept mine fix'd upon the ground; I bit my lips, I held my breath, my whole person was a burden to me. ---- Ah, Madam, what terrible things are lips and eyes, when one dares not make use of 'em with the angel one adores!

FAIRY.

You must, nevertheless, constrain yourself for some time longer. Perhaps the inclination that CINTHIA shews for you is not Love: It may only be caprice, or a fondness for a new object. ---- It will, therefore, be prudent for you to try her seven or eight days longer ----

OBERON.

OBERON.

Seven or eight days!

FAIRY.

Yes, child, seven or eight days.

OBERON.

But, dear Madam, do you consider the situation I shall be in? CINTHIA will have me with her every where, will be continually pulling me about, and playing with me. ---- Only think if she shou'd take me into her bed-chamber? ---- I declare, I begin to believe you think me really insensible.

FAIRY.

No; but I expect you to be discreet.

OBERON.

Rather say you expect me to bear a new-invented torment, which, I confess, is beyond my power,

FAIRY.

FAIRY.

And how do you think young girls do, who for months together resist their inclinations, hide their love, and appear not only insensible, but are often cruel to a lover they like ?

OBERON.

Oh ! I am neither a girl, nor a Statue, and will go this instant, and declare it to CINTHIA.

FAIRY.

Hold, dear son ! Don't be rash, and undo in a moment what I have been so long endeavouring to bring about ; let me prevail upon you to stay till I have made one more trial of her heart, and don't discover yourself unseasonably, since the happiness of your life depends upon it.

S C E N E



S C E N E VIII.

CINTHIA. FAIRY. OBERON.

FAIRY.

WELL, CINTHIA, I dare say you are wiser than to have done what you threaten'd?

CINTHIA.

I have demolish'd 'em all, I assure you, Madam; I have broke the Zodiac, and the Poles, and thrown the World out of the window.

FAIRY.

You are very passionate, CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

And you are very cruel, Madam: You often tell me you love me, yet you refuse doing

ing the only thing that you know can make me happy.

FAIRY.

Why, unfortunately, CINTHIA, your Charmer happens to be one of those kind of men call'd Beaus, and therefore 'tis impossible to make him think, or inspire him with reason : But to let you see I am willing to do every thing in my power to please you, he shall go and come, laugh and cry ; he shall throw himself at your feet ; shall appear tender, submissive, full of love ; but all this mechanically, like the rest of his kind.

CINTHIA.

Mechanically !

FAIRY.

Nay, he shall do more ; he shall whistle, shake, and even sing little songs with the words.

F CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

Oh, pray make him sing!

FAIRY.

With all my heart. But you'll remember that these parrots have but one jargon, a sort of common-place stuff, which they repeat indifferently to almost every woman they meet, and just as they learnt it.

CINTHIA.

You have told me that already ; you tease me with saying it over so often. ---- Pray make him sing.

FAIRY, [*aside to OBERON.*]

You see the part you have to act.

[*To CINTHIA*] I must hum it to him first.

[*Sings*]

When forming us ----

OBERON [*Sings.*]

When forming us ----

CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

Oh, my good Sovereign!

OBERON, [*Sings.*]

Kind Nature strove

To make us blest, ---- she gave us Love.

CINTHIA.

Oh! I am enchanted! The sound of his voice goes to my very heart!

OBERON, [*Sings.*]

I forget the predictions of an hateful Oracle.

CINTHIA.

What Oracle! What does he mean?

FAIRY.

Have you already forgot that these animals call'd Beaus, repeat every thing by chance, and just as they learnt it?

CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

Yes, Madam, I had almost forgot it ; but I see it wou'd have hurt your good nature very much, not to have put me in mind of it. ---- Well ?

FAIRY.

Well ?

CINTHIA.

Why does not he sing on ?

FAIRY.

Most likely because he has not learnt any more. I think you ought to be very well contented, for I am sure your parrot never said half so much to you.

CINTHIA.

My parrot ! Always my parrot ! You make these comparisons only to ridicule the inclination you see I have for him.

FAIRY.

FAIRY.

And you do nothing but scold. Upon my word, CINTHIA, you are in a very bad humour to-day.

CINTHIA.

How is it possible to be otherwise? for, after all, do but look at him. ---- Is it not cruel he cannot be made to comprehend how much I love him?

[OBERON, *aside to the FAIRY, who puts her hand upon his mouth, and makes signs to him, not to discover himself.*]

The Oracle is fulfill'd, and I will speak.

CINTHIA.

How many times a day shall I grieve at his insensibility!

FAIRY.

'Tis very true; ---- Don't trouble yourself
any

any longer about him ; turn him away, and think no more of him.

C I N T H I A.

Turn him away !---- turn away Charmer !
What ! deprive myself of the pleasure of
seeing him ? Oh Heavens !

F A I R Y.

Well, then, let him stay ; and divert yourself with teaching him verses, or any thing you have a mind he shou'd repeat.

C I N T H I A.

Now I love you. I'll begin this minute,
and teach him his first lesson. Come, Charmer,
let's see if you can pronounce my name.
---- C I N T H I A !

O B E R O N.

C I N T H I A !

C I N T H I A.

My dear C I N T H I A !

O B E R O N.

OBERON.

My dear CINTHIA!

CINTHIA.

I love you!

OBERON, [*Getting rid of the FAIRY, who strives to hold him, and throwing himself on his knees to CINTHIA.*]

Yes, I love you, I adore you, CINTHIA!
 ---- my dear, my charming CINTHIA! ----
 How many things I have to say! And yet I
 can only tell you a thousand times over and
 over that I love you!

CINTHIA.

Ah! My dear Sovereign! He speaks of
 himself!

FAIRY.

You see how much he is improv'd with
 one lesson.

OBERON.

OBERON.

Dear Madam, don't attempt any longer to deceive her. The Oracle is accomplish'd, and I may now shew her all the love and gratitude that my heart is fill'd with.

CINTHIA.

You have a tender, loving heart, then !
Why did you conceal it from me ?

OBERON.

On account of a dreadful Oracle, which declar'd I shou'd be miserable, if you did not believe me insensible. Can you be angry with me, CINTHIA, for deceiving you, since the success of my love depended upon it ?

CINTHIA.

Why should I, since it has given me the better opportunity of shewing the inclination I have for you ?

OBERON.

My dearest Mistress !

CINTHIA.

CINTHIA.

Rise, Charmer. --- O happy, happy CINTHIA!

FAIRY.

And now, my dear children, let me embrace you both : The Oracle is accomplish'd. Let an happy Hymen unite your loves ! And may you, OBERON, after having been a deaf, dumb, and insensible lover, be a tender, complaisant, and affectionate husband, and prove a contrast to the present times.

When artful beauty gives th' alarm,
Ye young! be deaf, be dumb, be blind;
Insensible to ev'ry charm,
That flows not native from the mind.

Ere Hymen join you to the Fair,
Her inmost soul with heed explore ;
Be that, fond youth, thy only care :
The ORACLE implies no more.

G CINTHIA.

CINTHIA, [*Sings.*]

I.

WOU'D you with her you love be blest,
Ye lovers, these instructions mind,
Conceal the passion in your breast,
Be dumb, insensible, and blind :
But when with tender looks you meet,
And see the artless blushes rise,
Be silent, loving, and discreet ;
 The ORACLE no more implies.

II.

When once you prove the maid sincere,
Where virtue is with beauty join'd,
Then boldly like yourself appear
No more insensible, or blind :
Pour forth the transports of your heart,
And speak your soul without disguise ;
'Tis fondness fondness must impart ;
 The ORACLE no more implies.

III.

III.

*Tho' pleasing, fatal is the snare
That still entraps all woman-kind;
Ladies, beware, be wise, take care,
Be deaf, insensible, and blind:
But shou'd some fond, deserving youth
Agree to join in Hymen's ties,
Be tender, constant, crown his truth;
The ORACLE no more implies.*

IV.

*Shou'd we, in this our faint essay,
Your usual kind indulgence find,
With gratitude we must repay,
Or be insensible and blind.
Thrice happy! if we dare to claim
The favour which we have in view:
Your judgment fixes praise or blame,
No ORACLE we know but You.*



EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. CIBBER.

*WAS not I right? — In spite of all their art,
I'd a shrewd guess that Charmer had a heart.
How vain their tricks! A girl that's in her teens,
By instinct knows, that men — are not Machines:
That having eyes, lips, heart, — can look, can sing,
Can love, can kiss, — in short, do every thing.*

*Pygmalion once a marble mistress woo'd,
(Fool! to prefer a stone to flesh and blood!)
But find a girl so simple, if you can,
To take a lifeless Statue for a man.
Methinks ev'n I cou'd know, tho' in the dark,
The diff'rence 'twixt a Statue, and a Spark:
Yes; I wou'd have their wiser heads to know,
We Females never are impos'd on so.*

*If to the Fair, my carriage shou'd to-night,
Appear too bold, too forward, or too light;
Shou'd my simplicity their censure move,
When I instruct young OBERON to love;
I hope to find indulgence, when I shew
The thing I toy'd with was — a harmless Bean:
Besides, my best excuse is yet to come,
When I grew fond, I thought my Charmer dumb:
Here, then, Gallants may this instruction find;
If men were secret, women wou'd be kind.*

FINIS.